

# Congratulations to the Winners of the Teen Writing Challenge

Grades 6—8

## 3rd Place—McKenzie Lemoine

### The Boy Who Ran Home

Every day on the bus, I sit in the same spot: Second seat to the front on the right. I sit alone and close to the window, always looking out. There's nothing special about me, or anyone else on the bus. You've got your jocks, rednecks, some divas, and the loners. I'm a loner, but I don't mind.

There's another kid that sits two seats behind me who's a loner like me. When this other kid, named

Seth, is dropped off in the afternoon, he instantly starts running down his driveway. Because this is different, the whole bus laughs at him as he runs down the long, rock-covered path. Seth knows that they do, yet he doesn't care. Something else seems to always be on his mind.

As Seth runs away from the bus and to the safety of his house, I watch him from my window, wondering why he is so eager to get home. Some people say his sister is suicidal, so Seth runs home to see if she killed herself yet, desperately hoping his sister is alright.

Day after day, I watch him run, possibly to his sister. Every single time he gets off, the entire bus breaks into a roar of laughter. Sometimes I wish I could get up and yell at them. Tell them how horrible they are for laughing when there may be a life on the line.

One day, Seth isn't on the bus, which is odd because he rarely ever misses school. He is also absent the next two days of the week. The people in the bus talk of how they wish he was there to laugh at. I only roll my eyes and continue watching the trees fly by.

Seth returns to the bus on Monday. There's something off about him today. He sits in his seat, hugging his knees to his chest. When I get a better look at his face, I see dark bags under his eyes. His hair is dirty and horribly knotted. When it is time for him to leave, I watch as he steps off of the bus.

Today, he only walks down the rocky path with his head down.

